

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05

CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

USIA-06 SAM-01 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00

ACDA-07 /109 W

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R 120913Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5976

INFO AMCONGEN HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 31164

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:ENRG, FR, VS

SUBJ: THE SEARCH FOR PETROLEUM IN SOUTHERN VIET-NAM

REF: BKK 23603

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH PETROLEUM DEPOSITS IN THE MEKONG DELTA DO NOT PRESENTLY APPEAR TO BE VERY PROMISING, THOSE OFFSHORE DO, IN THE OPINION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF A FRENCH FIRM DOING EXPLORATION WORK FOR THE VIETNAMESE. END SUMMARY.

1. EMPLOYEES OF THE COMPAGNIE GENERALE DE GEOPHYSIQUE (CGG), FRENCH FIRM UNDER CONTRACT TO THE SRV TO PROSPECT FOR PETROLEUM IN VIET-NAM, TRANSIT BANGKOK FROM TIME TO TIME AND HELP US UPDATE OUR KNOWLEDGE OF ONGOING PETROLEUM EX-  
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PLORATION THERE. ALTHOUGH A NUMBER OF THEM ARE BASED IN

SAIGON, AMONG RECENT ARRIVALS HAVE BEEN TWO FROM CAN THO AND ONE FROM A BOAT MOORED IN THE PRINCIPAL MOUTH OF THE MEKONG.

2. THEY STATED THAT CGG'S EXPLORATION WORK IS CONTINUING ACTIVELY. IN THE DELTA, WHERE THE COMPANY WAS INITIALLY "HIGHLY ENCOURAGED" BY ITS FINDINGS (REFTEL), IT HAD NOW BECOME CONSIDERABLY SOBERED ON THE BASIS OF FURTHER TESTS AND QUESTIONS WHETHER PETROLEUM DEPOSITS IN THE DELTA ARE IN QUANTITIES WORTH EXPLOITING. CGG'S VIEW ON THE OFFSHORE POTENTIAL HAS MOVED IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, TO ONE OF THE EXCITEMENT.

3. ONE CGG ENGINEER CLAIMED THAT ANOTHER FRENCH FIRM, COMEX, HAS BEGUN WORKING TO DEVELOP AN OIL INDUSTRY SUPPLY BASE AT VUNG TAU. ACCORDING TO A SOURCE FROM AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION, THE VIETNAMESE ARE PRESSING FOR THIS PROJECT AT THAT PARTICULAR LOCATION BECAUSE OF THE SUPPLY OF GOOD HOUSING AVAILABLE. IN ADDITION, CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DIRECT AIR CONNECTION BETWEEN VUNG TAU AND SINGAPORE, REGIONAL HQS FOR THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

4. THREE VIETNAMESE WHO HAD WORKED FOR SHELL IN SAIGON AS COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS ARRIVED IN THAILAND BY FISHING BOAT FROM VIET-NAM TWO MONTHS AGO. THEY STATED THAT THEIR OFFICE IN DOWNTOWN SAIGON HAD CONTINUE FUNCTIONING AT THE TIME OF THE TAKEOVER AND WAS SOON PLACED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF WHAT WAS TO BECOME THE SOUTHERN OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY OF OIL AND GAS. HEADED BY A SOUTHERN CIVILIAN LONG IN HANOI NAMED NGUYEN VAN CUONG, THAT OFFICE HAS 1,500 EMPLOYEES, THE MAJORITY OF WHOM WORK AT THE MAIN HEAD-QUARTERS AT NHA BE. THEIR OWN SMALLER OFFICE CONTINUED TO BE CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH PERSONNEL MATTERS AND THE LIKE. THE THREE SAW THEIR SALARIES REDUCED FROM 60,000 PIASTERS PER MONTH TO 18,000, WHILE WORK HOURS WERE LENGTHENED TO EXTEND FROM 6:30 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M. TWO PERSONS FROM THE NORTH HAD BEEN ADDED TO THEIR STAFF, A MAN WHO KNEW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT COMPUTERS AND A WOMAN TRAINED IN EAST GERMANY. THE THREE SAID THEY WERE REMOVED FROM CONTACT

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WITH ANY MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE CONCERNING PETROLEUM EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT. THEY ALSO NOTED THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAD MADE NO EFFORT TO DISCOVER THE CONTENTS OF SHELL'S COMPUTER TAPES, WHICH LARGELY CONTAIN PERSONNEL RECORDS.

WHITEHOUSE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PETROLEUM PRODUCTION, EXPLORATORY DRILLING  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 12 NOV 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28 APR 2004  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** THE SEARCH FOR PETROLEUM IN SOUTHERN VIET-NAM  
**TAGS:** ENRG, FR, VS, COMPAGNIE GENERALE DE GEOPHYSIQUE, CGG, COMEX  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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